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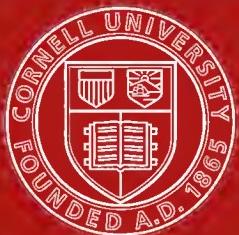
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A SYNOPSIS
OF THE
PERSIAN SYSTEMS OF
PHILOSOPHY.

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PREFACE.

The subjects dealt with in this little book appeal directly to a large number of Orientals, but the number of Europeans interested in such matters is constantly increasing. The historical and comparative study of Philosophy results in a revaluation of modern philosophy for its intrinsic worth, and without this comparison we cannot appraise our own systems. I have therefore reserved a certain number of copies for European readers.

Allahabad is too far away from my home for me to correct proofs, hence I regret that some misprints and errors have crept into the text. These have been, in all important cases, corrected on p. ii.

A. WORSLEY,

Isleworth, 1915.

CORRECTIONS.

P. 1, last para. I can find no record of a Chinese *army* having penetrated to the Caspian Sea. A Chinese Envoy, accompanied probably by a military escort, arrived there as stated. The *army* did not advance beyond Turkestan, or at least not as far as what was at that moment Persian territory. It appears that the relations between Persia and China were always of a friendly nature.

P. 3, par. 6, lines 5 and 6, "without" should read "with our."

P. 7, last line but one, "as they thought" should be in one bracket.

P. 7, par. 5, line 1 and Note (d). I am not here considering the various modern interpretations of the name *Zarathustra*, but am concerned solely with what the earliest authorities took to be the meaning. What was then believed was what guided the Zoroastrians of that day.

P. 8, first line, "Sun" should read "Son."

P. 8, Note (j), "Pharashs" should read "Pharoahs."

P. 13, par. 1, line 3, "worthy" should read "is worthy."

P. 14, first line, "situated" should read "so situated."

P. 15, par. 3, line 4, "not" should read "met."

P. 24, line 8, "present" read "presents."

P. 24, last par., line 7, "devine" read "divine."

P. 25, line 2, "conceives of" read "conceives."

P. 27, par. 5, line 9, "faces" read "phases."

P. 30, par. 5, line 4, "homogeny" read "hemogeny."

P. 31, last line, "thought" read "taught."

P. 32, par. 6, line 8, for "himself" read "and he himself."

P. 35, line 5, for "Polished" read "polished."

The Persian Systems of Philosophy

BY

A. WORSLEY.

Re-printed from the "Hindustan" Review.

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ALLAHABAD.



A SYNOPSIS OF THE PERSIAN SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY.

SECTION I.

Pages 1 to 4.

HISTORY—Alexander, Darius, Plato, Zoroaster, the Magi, Gautama Wu-ti, the Antonines, Sapor II, Muhammet.

HISTORIANS AND CRITICS—Laertius, Clearchus, Gibbon.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONFIGURATION of Persia and W. Asia.

CRITERIA OF REALITY in Europe and Asia.

RELIGION as affected by political and racial considerations.

SECTION II.

Pages 4 to 16.

ZOROASTRIAN AND MAGIAN PHILOSOPHY.

Fire Worship. Art. Parsis. Lao-Tzù. Confucius. Ming-ti. Yang and Yin.-Spenta-mainyu and angra-mainyu. Bayazid. Chuang-Tzu. Sankara. Kapila. Gautama. Persecutions. Star-Worship. Gods and Demons interchanged. Nihilism. Ahura Masda. Samkhya. Purusha. Gunas. Gâthas. Ormazd and Ahriman. Drukh (Druh) Darius. Vidyâ. Karman. Yasna. Upanishads. Avesta. Education. Darwin. Weismann. Doctrine of the two intellects. Isaiah. Kinvat. Resurrection. Ceremonial. Confession. Jews, Hâdhokht. Nask. Paradise. Vedânta. Upanishads. Apsaras. Talmud. Fravardin. Yasht. St. Luke. Pragmatism. Asmodeus. Sadi.

CRITICS AND COMMENTATORS—Breil. Attar. Karaka. Laertius. Jackson. Kama. Darmesteler. Haug. Roth. Mills. Xanthus. Dinon. Hermodorus. Niebuhr. Gibbon. Max Müller. Meurin. Firdausi. Matthew. Luke.

SECTION III.

Pages 17 to 20.

THE CREATION ; THE TEN INTELLIGENCES ; THE BRIDGE.

Gnostics. Hobbes. Dnemones. Sufis. Star-worship. Jâmi. Gunas. Pleasure and Pain. Valentinus. Infinity and Zero. Eleatics. Atomic agglomeration. Evolution. Illusion. Vyakta. Kant. Schopenhauer. Vedânta. Dhu'l-Nun. The Fall. Nescience. Atman. Upanishads. Time, Death, and Deeds. Samsara.

CRITICS AND COMMENTATORS—Paley. Madhusudana. Qushayri. Lao-Tzu.

SECTION IV.*Pages 20 to 30.***THE SUFIS.**

Dhu'l-Nun. Jâmi. Abu Yasid (Bayazid). Junaid. Rûmi. Lao-Tzû. Taoism. Buddhism and Brahmanism. Neo Platonism (Inspiration. Abd Al Razzâk. Dervishes. Rhapsody. Pragmatism). Muhammetanism. Fyzal. Fatalistic. Monism. Will. Shariat. Tarikat. Marifat and Hakikat. Morals. Socialism. Jesus. The three Heavens. Dogma. Zoroaster. Benevolence. Love. Union and Separation. Reflection. Quietism. Plotinus.

CRITICS AND COMMENTATORS—Nicholson. Max Müller. Jones. Merx. Attar.

SECTION V.*Pages 30 to 35.***EXTRACTS AND QUOTATIONS***from*

Attar. Bayazid. Omar Khayyam. Ben Uthmân Al Hujwîrî Jâmi

on

Nihilism, Intuition, Fânâ, Identity, Prayer. Renunciation, Gnosis, Reason, etc.

THE PERSIAN SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY.*

FOREWORD.

IN my *Concepts of Monism*, published in 1905, I dealt at some length with the Hindu systems of Philosophy, and more briefly with those of China. That special phase of Monism which finds its religious expression in Muhammadanism, and its philosophical expression in the Arabic and Persian systems, was reserved for separate treatment. The present essay to some extent fills in that hiatus in my work.

The bibliography of this subject has been so excellently done by Dr. Nicholson and others that there is nothing for me to add; so I have devoted myself, in especial, to a critical and comparative analogy of Persian Philosophy, Neo-Platonism, and the Hindu systems. If I have shown the exact place which Persian philosophy fills in universal philosophy, the objective of this essay has been attained. A precis of this essay was read before the India Society of London, on February 26th, 1913.

SECTION I.

The first Persian Empire lasted about 230 years (559 B.C. to 330 B.C.). At the beginning of this period the Persians invaded Greece, and at the close Alexander invaded Persia, defeated Darius and brought the first Persian Empire to a close. Alexander himself died in Persia. Plato flourished during this period, so that there is no historical difficulty in accounting for the incidence of a modified form of Neo-platonic philosophy in Persia. Laertius (*a*) declares that the "regular succession of Magi, the first of whom was Zoroaster," came to an end with the destruction of the (first) Persian Empire by Alexander.

Again Darius I, was master of part of India, and issued a decree in 546 B.C. declaring that India constituted a province of the Persian Empire. This was about the date of Gautama the Buddha, and there is no doubt that Buddhist missionaries subsequently visited Persia. Clearchus the Solensian declared that the Magi were the (philosophic?) ancestors of the Gymnosophists of India.

Chinese influence affected Persia rather later for during the reign of the Chinese Emperor Wu-ti of the Han dynasty (140 to 121 B.C.) his army penetrated to the Caspian Sea and beyond Turkestan. Hence they reached territory which at some time was included in the Persian Empire, and carried back to China a golden image of either Gautama or Zoroaster. It is clear from internal evidence that Zoroastrianism reached China with or possibly

* Abbreviated titles of works referred to in footnotes.
T. A. stands for the *Tadhkiratul Awliya* of Farid-uddin Attar
Qushayri for the *Risala* of Qushayri.
Theosophy for the *Theosophy* of Max Muller.

(a) Flourished towards the close of the second century A.D.

before, Buddhism, and so we cannot deny a mutual interchange of thought between the two countries.

But what I wish specially to insist upon is that inasmuch as these great movements of invasion, to and fro actually occurred between 550 and 120 B. C. that is during the historic period it is evident that such events were, at least possible.

Now it is quite certain that all Europe was swept, not by one or two, but by very many waves of Asiatic invasion dating far back beyond the limits of the historic period. As one instance, English history begins with the landing of the Romans in 54 B. C., but at that time we already possessed horses, Scythian war chariots, and the doctrine of Metempsychosis, all of which originated in Asia. Hence, we must not suppose that the ascertained racial movements between 550 and 120 B. C. constituted the first occasion when Hindu, Chinese, and Persian thought, mutually influence each other. What has happened once is removed for ever from the category of impossible events; and indeed we know from linguistic and graphic analogies that Hindu and Persian thought were allied long before the time of Darius I.

During the period of the Parthian Empire (150 B. C. to 220 A. D.); and between 220 A. D. and 652 A. D. when the second Persian Empire flourished Roman armies were continually invading the country.

Although this period included the great literary days of Rome and the zenith of Roman philosophy under the Antonines, we do not find many traces of Roman influence on Persian philosophy. One notable event however was perhaps attributable to Roman influence, and that is that the Persian Emperor Sapor II proscribed Christianity throughout his Empire in the year 326 A. D.

The Muhammetan period began in 652 and has continued ever since.

The configuration of Western Asia presents difficulties to invading armies. Roughly speaking the Caspian Sea divides its western frontier into two parts. The northern part was (in the pre-railway days) an inhospitable country, consisting mostly of tractless forest or sandy waste, and was productive of no supplies for any large body of invaders. The district south of the Caspian is constricted towards the South by the Persian Gulf to the comparatively narrow limits of Persian territory. Hence every invading force coming westwards from Asia, and moving eastwards from Europe, Syria, or Egypt, is forced to traverse Persia. Persia thus became the battlefield of the ancient world. To tread Persian soil is to tread on the dust of Empires in every sense of the word. Long after Alexander had slain the Persian giant, invading armies continued to devastate the land in their passage hither and thither, until it became like a vast cemetery. Even to-day rival empires, restrained from conflict by a diplomatic "arrangement", glare at each other over the tombstones like starving aghoris.

No doubt at one period Persia was not only the battleground but also the mart of all countries, and gained both in an intellectual artistic, and literary sense, by cosmopolitan interchange of ideas.

Before the study of Persian philosophy is begun it is well to consider a few special difficulties in the treatment of the subject. We in Europe partition off our ship of knowledge into various water-tight compartments. We regard Philosophy, Religion, Logic, Epistemology, etc., as separate subjects having no necessary connection with each other ; each of these has its own special criteria of reality and is studied as an independent subject. But such methods are only possible among peoples given over to pluralistic concepts of the universe. Monism must clearly sweep away all these divisions and diverse criteria, and insist upon applying the one criterion of Reason to gauge the reality of every allegation, tradition, or revelation.

Hence the monistic philosophies of Asia decline all those mutually contradictory "truths" which are so easily accepted by Pluralists. To them Truth means something universally true, * and not contradicted either by Philosophy, Religion or Logic.

The European's first experience of Persian philosophy is therefore utterly bewildering. The clash of all kinds of mutually contradictory "truths" long cherished in their various strongholds, the varying claims of all his "criteria of reality", deafen and confuse him. To overcome this difficulty requires some time and a great deal of steady thinking, for we must accustom ourselves to strange surroundings and modes of thought.

First of all let us consider the question of how nationality affects individual belief and why in an age of alleged freedom-of-thought certain philosophic concepts and religious beliefs still remain the property of particular races and countries.

Let me submit that Religion is the expression of national thought, of the egoism of the national entity, and that it has always been the main business of philosophers to give a metaphysical interpretation of all this, and, if possible, to prove that this national idea possesses some rational significance. Moreover we shall search in vain for a single instance in which a nation has voluntarily accepted a foreign religion without altering it in great measure to suit the national characteristics.

Christianity did not spread from Asia into Europe, and hence to America, without suffering various mutations. Again the question whether the established church in England was to be Romanist or Protestant was surely not decided by any alleged logical or historical superiority of one set of doctrines and ceremonies over the other set ! No. It is quite clear that the issue rested without political status, and also with our national character which showed a preference for that religion which conflicted least with its conscience and with its political independence. The division of the Roman Empire in to eastern and western sections clearly determined that one half of Europe should embrace the Greek Church and the other half Romanism.

* In concept.

We are faced with the fact that Asia as a whole clings to monistic conceptions of the universe, Europe and America to pluralistic views ; and this broad line of demarcation exists notwithstanding the many races inhabiting each continent. After we have given due weight to racial modes of thought it is clear that habit or mode of living must also be a determining factor ; and that the hustling, inconsequential methods of western life are incongruous with the thought-modes of the contemplative oriental. Moreover, in Christendom, Religion and Philosophy are so completely divorced from each other that we cannot comprehend the close partnership between them, and the mutual support of the one by the other, demanded by Monism. Our own thought-modes are a hindrance to us in this matter, and Persian philosophy must therefore be approached by Europeans with a complete abandon. We must appraise it as we would a rare example of eastern art, valuing it highly although we may be puzzled by the legends and signs engraved thereon, and with the assurance that when we have deciphered them and grasped their content we shall value our possession still more highly.

SECTION II.

ZOROASTRIAN AND MAGIAN PHILOSOPHY.

The similarities existing between all the greatest religions of Asia continually impress upon us the hypothesis of a primeval race, whose supposititious headquarters were in the central or northern parts of Asia, from whom, by tradition, have sprung the Aryan races, and whose early philosophy shows an indisputable connection with Chinese thought. It is not my object to pursue any racial question in this argument, but rather the philosophic ideals that have always been associated with these races, and have descended through them from an unknown past up to the present time.*

Now when we consider those fire-worshipping (or at least fire-loving) religions which trace their origin back to Zoroaster, and of whom the Parsis are at the present time the best known exemplars, we are at once brought up against a philosophical tradition which seems to carry us much further back into prehistoric times than does the theory advanced by many oriental writers that the Aryans of Persia and of India parted company from each other not much anterior to their southern migration. It is quite easy to trace in the philosophies of Hindustan and of Persia such striking similarities of thought and language that it is out of the question to deny a common parentage to them both. But when we compare the system of Zoroaster (*a*) with that of Lao-Tzu and his contemporaries, it is clear enough

* The 'old Fire Drake' of China reappears in the flames of Aetna, into whose recesses the evil monster had been flung by the Gods and remained imprisoned. The legend of St. George and the Dragon has the same origin. The many limbed Brahma of Hindu art find their analogy in the eight armed figures drawn by palaeolithic men in the caves and on the rocks of Spain. (Abbé Breil on "Art of the Palaeolithic Period" before Univ. College, London, Feb. 11, 1913.)

(*a*) As reconstructed from the fragments handed down to us.

that whatever relationship exists between these two dates back to a period when philosophic thought was in an embryonic state. Yet in many respects the ethical and ceremonial duties taught by Confucius have many points in common with the ethic of Zoroaster.

When dealing with the Chinese systems (a) I pointed out that to whatever extent they differ in form from the Brahmanic systems—and this difference is sufficiently striking—yet there were thoughts permeating both the Chinese and Hindu systems which brought them into very close alliance at several points. The Mean of quiescence between all contending principles, or Pairs of Opposites, in Chinese philosophy approaches very closely to the non-acting and non-willing Brahman of the Hindu systems. Some writers have gone much further than this, and profess that the “Not This” and “Not That” of Brahmanic thought constitutes a declaration of exact equipoise between all extremes whatsoever.

Once having admitted the relationship between the Persian and Hindu races, and hence between their respective philosophies, and also between the philosophies of Hindustan and of China, (b) we must find similarities between the Chinese systems and those which have sprung from Zoroaster, and, indeed, the connection which we do find is very striking.

In all Chinese systems the position of Yang and Yin resolved itself, in part, into an ethical contention, and hence is somewhat outside the sphere of pure philosophy. Yet all such antitheses presuppose in every instance a Supreme Power which overlooks and is removed completely above them both.

So we find that the ethical system of the Parsis is based upon good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, which clearly presupposes their antitheses in bad thoughts, words, and deeds. The Parsi system of philosophy, if we can justly apply the term to a system in which ethics figure so largely, purports to overcome this difficulty by the introduction of two rival elementary powers named *spenta-mainyu* (good spirit) and *angra-mianyu* (evil spirit) (c) who are the perpetual causes of agitation and (apparent?) change, and become, in short, the instigators of all actions. It is held that these two opposing principles are overlooked, and possibly to some extent controlled, by the Supreme Spirit of Persian philosophy. Here we have a basis of thought which differs in no respect from that of China; and beyond this there is an almost verbal similarity between the attributes of these two rivals; viz. of the former “Bright, Positive (Real) Day, etc.”; and of the latter “Dark, Negative (Unreal), Night, etc.”

(a) Concept of Monism XV.

(b) During the reign of the Chinese Emperor Ming-ti his envoys reached the hinterland of Hindustan.

(c) According to some, these rivals are not to be conceived as separate entities, but as differing states of mind in the Supreme Spirit.

Yet these principles of Good and Evil are no more than a pair of opposites; necessary, doubtless, to sustain our thought but none the less phantasms, and as such unable to cross the bridge into the world of eternity and of absolute Being. Hence the attempt to attach the Supreme Spirit with such product of Nescience exhibits a void in philosophic thought.

It may certainly be said that a difference does exist between the ultimate concepts of Chinese and Zoroastrians thought in as much as the Zoroastrian profess a Supreme Spirit which is above these contending factors, whereas in Chinese philosophy this view is not insisted upon. But yet the difficulty presented to Chinese philosophy is insoluble unless we may pre-suppose a Supreme Cause above all these contentions. For although the Chinese systems profess to be monistic, it is obvious that no system can be other than dualistic if it admits, as eternal and unalterable principles, two such extremes as those of Yang and Yin. Without this supposition (of a Supreme Supervisor) all systems founded on this basis must be fundamentally and unalterably dualistic ; therefore the very fact that Chinese systems claim to be monistic shows that they did pre-suppose (or at least contemplate the possible existence of) a Supreme Spirit above these contending factors; and hence their philosophical basis is in this respect substantially the same as that of the Zoroastrians.

Incidentally we find Chinese similes and modes of expression scattered here and there over Persian literature. Bayazid of Bistam says (*a*) "Dost thou hear how there comes a voice from the brooks of running water? But when they reach the sea they are quiet, and the sea is neither augmented by their incoming nor diminished by their outgoing". But Chuang Tzu had the same in his *Autumn Floods* when the world was younger.

In the Chinese systems we can trace clearly and authoritatively the sequence of philosophic thought back at least as far as Lao-Tzu ; so also in the Hindu systems we can go back to Sankara, Kapila, Gautama, and so forth, although some obscuration occurs in the case of Kapila through the existence of several persons who bore the same name during the course of several generations and even centuries.

Now in the case of the Zoroastrians we are faced with the difficulty that there were six philosophers named Zoroaster, all of whom, as far as we can learn, are alleged to have taught more or less the same doctrines. These Zoroasters are said to have been respectively of Assyrian (or Chaldean), Bactrian, Pamphylian, Armenian, Median, and Persian origin. The Parsis swear by the one who is said to have been born at Rae in Media and to have lived in Bactria (*b*) and to have flourished about 700 B.C. (Jackson), 800 B.C. (Prof. Darmesteter), 1000 B.C. (Dr. Haug),

(*a*) T. A. i, 163,7.

(*b*) D. F. Karaka *History of the Parsis*—Macmillan, 1884.

or 1300 B.C. (K. R. Kama in *Zarthosht-Nama*). The most remote date is that assigned by Prof. Roth and Mr. L. H. Mills, *viz.*, 1200 to 1500 B.C. and by Xanthus the Lydian 6500 B.C. (b) He is distinguished from the rest by his family name of Spitama.

As to the legends surrounding his nativity these are supplied in fair number, and in some cases are more or less exact replicas of Christian legends. The miraculous circumstances attending his birth caused alarm among the local magnates and attempts were made to murder him. He retired to the top of a mountain for meditation and prayer, and received divine inspiration. He performed miracles. But such similarities are after all trivial and without weight, except in so far as they show what claims were necessary to excite the wonder and secure the faith of the ignorant populace of those times and places.

It is when we compare the religious beliefs of the Christians and of the Zoroastrians of the present day that we are forced to realise to what great extent the doctrines of one religion have been grafted on the other, and how strongly interaction has mutually affected both (c).

Consider the question of Star Worship. Now, Sun and Moon, Day and Night, Masculine and Feminine, are primordial divisions. They are the most obviously existent and suitable objects of worship, and the fact that they have received this worship since time immemorial constitutes clear *prima facie* evidence of rational thinking in mankind.

The dawn of the historic period in every continent disclosed the human race engaged in worshipping these divinities. In China the rival principles of Yang and Yin represented in the one case Sun (Day), Goodness Activity (or Masculine property), and in the other Darkness (Night), Evil, Passivity (or Feminine property). In Hindostan the conflict between Sun and Moon worshippers is recorded in the *Mahabharata*; and in Britain, Peru, Egypt, and nearly all over the world similar beliefs prevailed. It is also clear that Astronomy, as followed in China and in Egypt, was a form of religious exercise pursued by the priesthood.

The very name *Zoroaster* means (d) *Sacrifice to the Stars*, and the Magians were undoubtedly Star-worshippers. To them the appearance of a new star was an event of the most supreme religious importance. Some held that the union between the Sun (masculine) and the Moon (feminine) which took place (as they thought at times of an eclipse when the shadow cast by the highest luminary (the Sun) overshadowed the lower Luminary (the Moon),

(b) Diogenes Laertius "*Lives, etc., of Philosophers*" written about 200 A.D.

(c) In Zoroastrian ceremonial consecrated food (bread, water, etc.) are offered with prayers; and the Confessional to the head priest alone was once a recognised custom.

(d) Laertius gives Dion and Hermodorus as authorities.

would be followed by the birth of a Sun. (a) But others anticipated the appearance of a new feminine divinity, and it is said that this difference of opinion led to serious conflicts. It was therefore of great importance that the gender of the young God should be settled as soon as possible, and by reputable persons whose dictum would receive general assent. Hence, when a new star appeared (b) to the East of Jerusalem, *viz.*, in Persia, (c) the Sun-worshipping section of the Magi at once sent a deputation into Syria, which, as the name implies, was the Sun-land and given over to an occult Sun-worship. (d) Here, if anywhere, the question of gender could be settled once for all.

According to Jewish tradition this occurred at Bethlehem, and the birth of a Son of God became an accomplished fact to the Sun-worshipping community in Syria and Persia.

At birth the horoscope (e) was cast, and the Son of the Sun (f) completed the Trinity (g) of Luminaries in the Heavens, guarding, enriching and sanctifying the earth.

(a) St. Luke I 35. "And the angel answered and said unto her. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

(b) According to Christian tradition and Bible

(c) St. Matthew II 1-2. Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews ? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

(d) See James I 17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The Sun was clearly the father of all the lesser lights of the firmament, and showed no inclination to vary in size, or turn to one side, after the manner of the Moon in her various phases. No doubt this point received great emphasis in the arguments brought up by the Sun-worshippers against the Moon-worshippers.

On the other hand History shows us that the adoration of Sun, Moon, or Star, is no detriment to any particular religion, for some form of this cult is the common property of all religions. These limunaries are primordial facts in human consciousness from which there is no escape, and their worship constituted an objective process of which Religion and Philosophy were the subjective side.

(e) St. Matthew II. 7—11 "Then Herod when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared," etc.

(f) The "Son of the Sun" was the supreme title of the Pharaohs, and Mosaic tradition would not lose the name.

(g) We have no record of what happened when the brilliance of the new star lessened. But trouble threatened the erstwhile "Wise men of the East."

It seems as though a philosophic tradition had been carried down in Persia from time immemorial, slightly varied perhaps by the advent of some great teacher who taught this tradition as illuminated by his own thought; and those who followed him taught the philosophic tradition according to the light he had thrown upon it, and became in that sense the teachers of a special school named after him. We must also bear in mind that it was the immemorial custom in the East for devotees to renounce their proper name whenever they joined a religious or philosophic school, and to accept a new name founded upon doctrine. (a) Hence such teachers may have been called after Zoroaster, but this is only a possibility, and does not rest upon any basis in known fact. Beyond this the destruction of philosophical works, libraries, and inscriptions, in fact the almost total blotting out of civilization which has occurred in Persia on more than one occasion, the continuous religious persecution of those who declined to change their belief, together with the fragmentary nature of the authentic records which carry us back to about the times in which the great Zoroaster taught, has rendered it impossible for us to know what system of philosophy he really professed (b) At best we have left only fragments of his philosophic teaching intermingled with a great deal of ethical matter, all of which if taught by a philosopher, must have had at some time a basis in metaphysics, however unstable or debateable this original foundation may have been. In fact the authority upon which the Zoroastrians of to-day rely is no more secure from criticism than is the case with regard to Christianity. Hence it is impossible for us to criticize the philosophical Systems of Zoroaster himself, because we do not know what he thought; and the system which is alleged to have sprung from his thought has been handed down to us in an incomplete and defective state. I mean by this that it appears to us now as a system which has been fossilized in the making, and has never reached the goal of mature philosophic thought. As it stands it purports to have reconciled Ethic with Philosophy and to have produced the negative from the positive without external help, and both these claims make impossible demands upon our credence. Gibbon stigmatises it as "a bold and injudicious attempt to reconcile the existence of Evil with a beneficent Creator and governor of the world."

The similarities between the Indian and the Persian systems of thought are matched by equally striking dissimilarities. Critics have not been of one mind as to how the gods of the Indian systems become the demons of the Zoroastrian systems. Presumably the Gods of the aborigines fought on their behalf against the Aryan invaders and their Gods, and thus earned the title of demons or asuras. Later on, under the aegis of Muhammetanism, all pantheistic and polytheistic divinities would be included in the category

(a) The teacher became known to the public through the name on his phylactery.

(b) Laertius hints that he was a mythological person. Niebuhr (according to Gibbon) "considered him a purely mythical personage."

of demons by the dominant religion of Monotheism. Demons were allowed in any number without outraging orthodoxy, but to even name God was an offence to Muhammetans.

Again, there is the possible solution provided by Nihilism and by Materialism, *viz.*, that Gods and Demons are but conceptual extremes and are hence interchangeable without detriments to the argument. There is another solution to this problem suggested by Max Müller. The word "Asura" in Sanskrit stands for demon, and Max Müller has shown how from this word "Asura," by a faulty analogy, the word "Sura" sprung, as though the word "Asura" meant the opposite to "Sura." As it was possible for such mistake to have occurred in Sanskrit literature, we must not dismiss from our minds the possibility of equally absurd transpositions amongst the Persians (*a*). It is quite clear that the first title of the Supreme Spirit of Zoroastrian philosophy—Ahura Masda—was undoubtedly derived, either directly or collaterally, from Asura, but we are still left in the dark as to how this transposition of demon into god was effected.

In comparing the Hindu philosophies with that of Zoroaster our attention is specially drawn to the resemblance which this latter bears to the Samkhyan system. The Devas (*b*) of the Samkhya have indeed been turned into Idols, if not into evil beings, in the Zoroastrian system. But perhaps this change is not so radical as it may seem to us at first sight, and we should make every allowance for the zeal of a proselytising controversialist such as we may consider Zoroaster to have been, who was seeking to re-establish the faith of Monotheism in a country given over to Polytheistic worship.

Beyond this one difference, a close similarity of thought exists under altered names Purusha (Ahura-Mazda) overlooks the world, and the perpetuators of unevenness (Gunas of the Samkhya) are replaced by the rival spirits of Good (or the Creative) and of Evil (or the Destructive) in the Zoroastrian system. Hence in both there lay an element of Dualism, not easily expunged, and yet which (so long as it remained unexplained-away) vitiated the Monistic basis of both systems.

Those who argue from the analogy of the decadence of other philosophies will seek to impute to Zoroaster a more or less perfect system, and will account for the derogation of that system into something imperfect and indefensible by the process of decurrency which has always followed the loss of Idealism. They will tell us that every system of philosophy becomes in time more or less stereotyped and incapable of further expansion, but yet subject to the imposition thereupon of all kinds of dogmas which had no existence in the thought of the founder. We may clearly trace this derogation of philosophy to the necessities of propaganda.

(*a*) In fact many similar transpositions are noticeable in all classes of nomenclature, even in Science. We have the Colombe, or Dove-flower, changed at one stroke into the Aquilegia, or Eagle-flower.

(*b*) Phenomenal Gods, usually associated with Pantheism or Polytheism.

Certainly in the times of Zoroaster and his successors those systems which numbered only a small minority of the inhabitants were always subject to persecution at the hands of other and more popular religions. Hence the instinct of self-preservation dictated a course of action which would tend to secure the greatest number of converts. In this way it was always sought to bring ethical questions within the pale of every system. The religious systems lent themselves to this necessity, because they all pre-suppose a certain dualism, however carefully this may be veiled. I know of no religious system which does not set up Good and Bad as the respective attributes of gods and devils, and therefore by religious systems all classes of ethical contention are easily assimilated. But this does not apply to philosophies. For instance in the orthodox systems of Hindustan, ethical contentions are held to be outside their sphere, for they all contend that Ethic is something relative to ourselves, and hence belongs to a world that is temporary and unreal, and that the world of philosophic thought cannot be attached in any way by ethical contention. The system of Zoroaster, however, was unable to maintain its philosophy in a pure form. There is probably no country in the world in which religious persecution has been carried on with such long continued ferocity as in Persia, and hence the first thought of all Persian zealots was to obtain such a large number of adherents that they need no longer fear the extinction of their worship at the hands of more numerous and powerful religions. In the case of the Hindu philosophies it is probable that they were only saved from a similar necessity by the immunity from religious persecution which obtained in Hindustan for so many centuries.

Directly it was sought to incorporate in Zoroastrian philosophy a system of ethics, the whole basis of that philosophy was rendered destitute. We can perhaps find traces of a sound basis of philosophic thought as taught by Zoroaster and his immediate successors, and we can with more or less accuracy fix the time when an ethical superstructure was implanted upon the foundation which he had built. As Max Müller first pointed out, "In the ancient Gathas there is no trace as yet of a personal conflict between Ormazd and Ahriman. The enemy against whom Ormazd fights there, is Drukh, the vedic Druh, "the lying spirit." Darius also in the cuneiform inscriptions does not yet mention Ahriman as an opponent of Ormazd (*a*). Here we are back again to the basis of vedic philosophy, on which the conflict is between Truth and Nescience. The enemy is "the Lying Spirit," *i. e.*, who ever distorts the Truth or teaches it imperfectly. So it is clearly after this period that ethical contentions were introduced into the Zoroastrian system. Nor can I altogether agree with Dr. Haug when he goes so far as to state that Zoroaster solved the difficult question presented by the apparent incongruity of Philosophy and Ethics, and had succeeded in reconciling the two, because in the passages to which Dr. Haug draws our attention the whole argument hinges round the question of Reality and Unreality, that is

of Truth and Nescience. The producer of all Reality might certainly be called the Good Mind in antithesis to the Evil Mind, or producer of Unreality, without our being justified in drawing the conclusion that Good and Evil in this sense bear any ethical interpretation whatever; for it seems to me that this contention is no more than the Samkhyan concept of *Vidya* and *Avidya*, and in this sense falls entirely within the proper sphere of Philosophy. Even if the philosophy of Zoroaster was originally monistic, it could no longer remain so after any ethical contention had been incorporated therewith, for Ethic is a something relative to ourselves, and hence indissolubly bound up with some form of anthropomorphic belief. Again, Anthropomorphism is the world of the I and the It, of Yourself and Myself, and hence pre-supposes Dualism (or some otherness); and without Dualism would be meaningless. Now it is easy to see why so many contentions have arisen as to whether the Zoroastrian system was one of Monism or of Dualism. It might have been originally monistic, but it certainly became dualistic, and its dualism was undoubtedly due to the introduction of Ethic to the destruction of its original philosophy. It was dualistic only by force of the alterations to which it became subject, and had it not been for the necessity of making converts in number, it is quite possible that the philosophy of Zoroaster might have maintained its original basis, and have ultimately ranked as a monistic system comparable with those of Hindustan. We should bear in mind that the orthodox system of Indian philosophy gave great attention to the necessity of disabusing the mind of all ethical contentions, of proving that Good and Bad are so only in a temporary and relative way, and cannot transcend the world of *Karman*; that no real and abiding truth can be adduced from such temporal and relative views, and that all that remains after the destruction of such thoughts is the question of Truth and Nescience. We have all this over again in the Zoroastrian philosophy in its early stages. If as Max Müller states, (*a*) "Zoroaster has evidently perceived that without possible evil there can be no real good, just as without temptation there can be no virtue," he had surely learnt enough to show him that Ethic was fatal to philosophy.

In *Yasna XII.* we find the worship of phenomenal gods was abjured, and we may take it that this abjuration was directed against the pantheistic side of Persian worship. Such abjuration was never made by philosophers, but by those who were violent partisans in some ethical dispute. This was certainly at a comparatively modern period in the history of Zoroastrianism; but what strikes us most in considering this passage in *Yasna XII* is the great gulf that had already grown up between Persian and Indian thought. Those who made this abjuration did so in complete ignorance of the incompatibility of philosophy and ethic, and ignorance which is unthinkable should we seek to transfer it to their Hindu contemporaries. As Max Müller truly points out (*b*) "The idea that knowledge or faith is better

(*a*) *Theosophy.* p. 185
 (*b*) *Theosophy,* p. 190.

than good works, and that a higher immortality awaits the thinker than the doer, an idea so familiar to the authors of the Upanishads, is quite foreign to the Avesta. The Avestic religion is before all things an ethical religion. It is meant to make people good".

The doctrine of Zoroaster that there are two forms of wisdom or thought, *viz.*, that which was born (originated at birth or was given at birth), and that which was subsequently acquired, worthy of special consideration, for it takes the place in philosophic thought of the problem which has been debated in another form by Darwin, Weismann, and many other recent scientists. The problem is whether any characters, whatsoever their nature, can be acquired in such sense as to subsequently become permanent characteristics not only of the individual who had acquired them, but of his descendants. It was held certainly by Darwin that the individual, and consequently the protoplasm or germplasm of the individual, could be altered by environment; that characters of some sort could be implanted upon the individual by re-action to external agencies, and that the results of such acquirements could be permanently retained. Weismann, on the other hand, held that no permanent acquirements could be obtained in this manner; that whatever external circumstances influenced the individual in the latter stages of growth or maturity such results could not be permanently retained, but would be as easily lost as they had been acquired that the germplasm could be altered in one way only and that was at the moment of cell-union, and then in a purely fortuitous way.

If, by way of analogy, we apply the doctrine of Weismann to the brain, or thinking organ, we should deduce this that capacity for obtaining knowledge, or for thought in any of its phases, was inborn in the individual, and that the optimum result of education is limited to getting the best possible work out of this organism, but is unable to increase its optimum powers in any way. Long before him, and far back in the mists of folklore we come upon the proverb that "Genius is born and not made". Now, the doctrine of Zoroaster that there were two intellects, the one born, and the other acquired (literally, by the ear) is only another instance of how the demonstrations of Science follow, at a decent interval of time, the thoughts of philosophers. Zoroaster must certainly have had in his mind that whatever knowledge could be acquired must be limited by the optimum capacity of the brain as born in the individual; that the man who was born wise might never rise into notoriety on account of his knowledge, if, through negligence or any other cause, he failed to acquire the current phraseology of his day. Just as an engine, however perfectly made, would fail to do its mead of work unless it was properly tended and kept in operation: but however well attended, however well fed, and however carefully supervised the class of work which an inferior type of engine could turn out must always be more limited. So that the man born wise in certain respects might have imperfections in others, and be unable by himself to achieve success; yet in conjunction with other minds who could supply that in which he was deficient, he might still attain success. Hence it might be insufficient for the individual to be touched by a fairy at his birth

unless he was also situated that he had access to the words of the teacher in early life. He who was born wise should also in order to make the best use of this gift, be trained to think, and be placed as soon as may be in a position to acquire the accumulated wisdom of the day without having to waste time in obtaining all this experience by personal experiment. In formulating this basis for educational effort Zoroaster showed a greater knowledge of the possibilities of education than is shown at the present day in Europe. For we are now asked to believe that education can effect some radical change in the mind of the student, and bring both those "born wise" and those afflicted with congenital Nescience up to some vainly imagined level of knowledge.

The ideas of heaven and hell which we can trace in Persian and also in Hebraic literature show very great similarities. In both cases the acquisition of a preferential or detrimental position in another world was made dependent upon ethical merits in this life. After all it is not remarkable that such thoughts should dominate religious devotees in any country. Those who did not agree with them, whom they did not like, and whom they would have wished to torture in this life had the opportunity arisen, were naturally singled out for tortures in the life to come; whereas their benefactors and their dupes, whom they viewed with favour on account of their "good" deeds, would naturally receive preferential treatment hereafter in the heaven of their own thought. At any rate it was cheaper to promise them this than to reward them now.

Perhaps the greatest authority upon the ethical side of Zoroastrian belief is Dr. Haug, and he says that the heaven of Zoroaster himself, according to the Gathas; was named the "House of Hymns" (a) Hell is called the "House of Destruction." This cannot mean the destruction of the individual, for otherwise there would be no eternal torment; and if this is the house of the destruction of Deeds, we may well ask what deeds? Surely not of bad deeds, otherwise the doers would become purged and inequity result from further torments; and if of good deeds, then how did the performer reach the House of Destruction? We are not given any answer.

The "Bridge of the Gatherer" (Kinvat) was not between heaven and hell as some have thought, but was conceived by the Zoroastrians as a bridge between this world and the other world, which grew as a high-road when a good man passed over, but which was narrowed down to a thread when a bad man attempted to pass, so that he fell off into hell.

The "Resurrection of the Body" was not as far as we can learn, taught by Zoroaster himself, although some doctrine of this kind developed afterwards in Zoroastrian teaching. Nor does it appear that Zoroastrians conceived original Damnation and subsequent Redemption as necessary prerequisites to Salvation. To them the question is not complicated in this sense. Salvation depends entirely upon deeds, is a reward for good works.

(a) Compare Isaiah VI.

There was also a similarity between the "Law" of the Hebrews and of the Zoroastrians, in that they both contained a canon of ceremonial observances, restrictions, and ordinances beneficial for use in everyday life, and not necessarily connected with dogmatic belief. These laws referred in especial to precautions which should be taken in the case of certain illnesses, to ablutions, ceremonial batheings, and the cleansing of houses, etc. At some time dogmatic beliefs appear to have become intermingled with these sanitary and generally beneficent canons of conduct both in the Hebraic and also in the Zoroastrian religions. For instance, it was subsequently held among the Zoroastrians that the carrying out of some of these ordinances constituted not only proper and dutiful conduct, but became good deeds in the sense that they would earn for their performers a place in heaven. Amongst such good actions was included the tending of sheep, irrigation, and the killing of vermin (a).

Later Zoroastrian belief became undoubtedly dualistic and founded on the deification of good and evil principles under the names of Ormazd and Ahriaman. Hence the necessity for prayer became of paramount importance in later Zoroastrian worship. To love the one and hate the other, to pray to the one and abjure the other, became necessities of their daily lives. The Parsis of the present day commence their worship confessing their sins to the priest, in a similar way to that in use in the Church of Rome. It was pointed out by Bishop Meurin (Roman Catholic Bishop of Bembay) that those who ridicule the Zoroastrians as Fire worshippers, should remember that in Mosaic days the same ridicule might have been applied to the Jews, (b) but in neither case, as he asserts, with any truth. The eternal flame of the Zoroastrian temples finds its counterpart also in Greece, Rome, and many other parts of the world where fire worship is not contemplated. Nor are we justified in confusing the ritual of Religion with whatever eternal truths may be therein contained. The best authorities in general maintain that the early religion of Persia was a pure form of monistic theism. Firdausi held that the Persians of his day were not fire worshippers, but that the fire in their temples was merely an emblem of the Almighty; that the light of God shineth in all that giveth light. He says, "Say not that they were worshippers of fire. They were worshippers of one God."

The philosophic basis of earlier Zoroastrian thought crops out from time to time amongst the ethical matter with which it was subsequently intermingled. For instance we find in the *Hadhokht Nask*, as translated by Dr. Haug (p. 220) that the soul of the good man on reaching Paradise is not by the personification of all his own good deeds in the form of a beanteous maiden who addresses him in terms of praise; one of such terms being "Everybody did love thee for that greatness and freedom from sorrow in which thou dost appear to me." It is not easy to give a clear explanation of the appearance of this phrase "freedom from sorrow" if we have to rely entirely upon Zoroastrian thought as it has been handed down to us; but if we can admit the Vedantic explanation, the meaning of the phrase becomes obvious. The soul was free from sorrow because not attached by deeds, and hence entirely above that Pair of Opposites which sustain ethical disputes. It was the immortal soul (Atman of Vedantic thought) which was free from sorrow; when Death, Time, and Deeds were left behind. The same idea of the beautiful maiden in the hall of Brahman appears in the *Kaushitaki Upanishad* 1. 3, at a time when it, must be remembered, the philosophic thought of India was not out of its swathing bands. In this passage the departed are received by beautiful maidens called Apsaras. But, as Max Muller points out, the

(a) All which ordinances are properly aimed at encouraging Nomads to become pastoral or agricultural peoples

(b) Isaiah VI.

Upanishads are in great part philosophical, and not merely ethical, and hence we find in the Upanishads that what is rewarded in a future state is Knowledge (of the Truth) and not Deeds. This difference is exemplified in another passage in the Talmud (a) in which we are told that "at the time of the resurrection the soul will justify itself and say "The body alone is guilty, he alone has sinned. I had scarcely left it when, pure like a bird, I flew through the air". But the body will say : "The soul alone was guilty, she has driven me to sin. She had scarcely left me, when I lay on the ground motionless and sinned no more". Then God places the soul once more into the body and says : "See, how you have sinned, now render an account, both of you." Now here it was clearly recognised that deeds could not cross the bridge into other world, but yet we are not told how this difficulty was to be overcome. For in this passage from the Talmud there still remains a something relative, and limited by time and special conditions, and we are still far from having reached the pure goal of Vedantic thought.

Max Muller has also called attention to certain passages in the *Fravardin Yast*, written in the mythological style which we find both in Hebraic and Indian legend when narrating conversation held between God and Man. In this case the Supreme Spirits converses with Zoroaster as follows—"If the strong guardian angels of the righteous should not give me assistance.....then would commence the devil's power, the devil's origin the whole living creation would belong to the devil." (b) In this passage we are strongly reminded of the account of the Temptation in St. Luke, in which the devil says, "For that is delivered unto me ; and to whomsoever I will I give it". But in making this comparison we should remember that these latter writings of Zoroastrian literature had undoubtedly been influenced by Hebraic thought, and that converse was also true in some respects, although we are not able to claim with certainty more than one instance of Zoroastrian thought as clearly influencing that of the Hebrews. (c) The next paragraph of the *Fravardin Yast* goes on to say "By means of their splendour and glory the ingenuous man Zarathushtra, who spoke such good words, who was the source of wisdom, who was born before Gautama.....clearly showing that at this time not only was the knowledge of Gautama, but also the influence of his teaching spread in Persia. This undoubtedly gives us the key to the dominant position Ethic held over pure philosophy in those latter Zoroastrian teachings, for we can recognise in them the same ethical basis as we find in the teachings of the Buddha, but not perhaps the same elaboration of doctrine.

A review of Persian thought presents a vision of Philosophy overshadowed by the growth of Ethic, for it is in Ethic that Persian systems excel, and although Ethic lies outside my thesis, perhaps you will pardon me for giving you one short paraphrase from the writings of the great Persian dialectician Sadi.—

"Kiss not thy son in the presence of the orphan boy, for, should he weep, who will comfort him ? Therefore cherish him and see that he weeps not. I was a king once when my head rested upon my father's bosom. But that kingdom was taken from me whilst I was but a child. Now, should I fall into misfortune, will my friends help me ? Well do I know the orphan's sorrow."

(a) *Synhedr* 91. 6., Midrash, Genes, Rabba, 169.

(b) Pragmatism has revived these views within the last few years.

(c) Amosdeus.

SECTION III.

CREATION.

The Ten Intelligences.

Gnostics held that Spirit and Matter were incommensurate, and if our latter-day empiricists had studied Philosophy they could not have made such absurd demand as that all Being should become phenomenal at the pain of being denied by them. But what Gnosticism did not fully realise was that this assertion of incommensurability rendered any real "Creation" impossible ; that if Spirit could not affect Matter then any beginning of matter by an immaterial Maker (Creation) was for ever an impossibility, and that any supposition change or process of whatever kind in the material Universe could only take place by virtue of some internal (as opposed to any external) re-arrangement ; that any such suppositions or possible "change" must be, as Hobbes knew full well, merely motion in the parts changed. Hence what the Gnostics lacked was the concept that all real change in the objective world *de se* is impossible, just as all real change in the subjective world of the Self is impossible. If they had realised this they could not have missed the only possible conclusion, which is that the objective world of Matter is thought by the Subject, grows with his knowledge, and appears to change as the fetters of Illusion fall away.

Hence all this apparent otherness is phantasmic, and we do not need any Aeons, Dnemones, or Frontier Spirits to effect metamorphoses. Indeed I think the Gnostics must have had some glimmering sense of the utter impossibility of such changes, for they tacitly recognised that neither Gods nor Men could effect them ; for if otherwise, what need for Aeons or Dnemones ? (a)

The Sufis in the same way as did the Magi before their time called upon the astral bodies to strengthen their contention in favour of nine Heavenly Spheres and of ten Intelligences. Our Earth was the sphere of the lowest Intelligence, which was called "The Active." Of this Jami says. (b)

"The Incomparable Creator, when this world
He did create, created first of all
The First Intelligence—First of a chain
Of ten Intelligences, of which the last
Sole Agent is in this our Universe,
Active Intelligence so called ; the one
Distributor of Evil and of Good,
Of Joy and Sorrow."

We can here discern some relationship to the Samkhyan Gunas, at least in the matter of attributes. For if the tenth Intelligence is the Distributor of Good and Evil and of their physical counterparts of Joy and Sorrow, this

a Dr. Paley's suggestions on this subject are childish, *Natural Theology*, Chapter III,

b Salaman and Absal (Fitz Gerald's rendering).

thought is not removed from the Samkhyan concept in which the Gunas were the only possible Originators of Actions. For as in Hindu philosophy generally, Deeds were either good or bad and brought about as their consequences Pleasure and Pain, so those (Gunas) who are in Samkhyan philosophy the sole possible agents of action must also be the Distributors of Good and Evil with their co-relatives Pleasure and Pain.

But the interest of this chiefly lies, not in any direct philosophical connection between the Hindu systems and the writings of Jami, but rather in an historical link between the thought of one system and of another, (*a*) showing how ideas, although perhaps not in their original purity, may influence, and indeed must influence, the subsequent thought of the world.

Muhammetan, and in especial Persian, monism realised one fact very clearly, and that was that between the world of our experience conditioned as it is by an ineradicable duality, and the Supreme Cause of all, there must intervene some intermediary. Without such intervention there seemed no possibility of accounting for anything, and Philosophy and Religion would both be fated to rest for all time upon some self-contradictory assertion or radical incompatibility. Whence clearly sprang the concepts of the ten Intelligences and the nine Spheres.

No doubt the question was seriously debated in the Schools of Hindustan as to whether Infinity and Zero, the Thing and the No-thing, were either of them actualities or had any true existence; yet the answers given are hardly sufficient. Nor does it appear that either the Chinese or the Eleatics discerned the "other" truth that such things are merely the conceptual co-efficients, or co-requisites, of our own knowledge, such as are Subject and Object. Were the Great Extremes things-in-themselves, conditioning the Mean, or were they themselves conditioned by the Mean? Was it the man-like God that made Man, or the god-like Man who thought his own image over again in the heavens?

In this connection the Eleatic philosophy becomes theoretically dualistic in that it maintains that Thesis and Antithesis can only exist in dual relationship, and that hence Zero is the supporter of Infinity and Ignorance of Knowledge. (*b*)

As to the Hindu replies, we find Madhusudana says (*c*) that there are three ways of accounting for the appearance of Pluralism (Creation), *viz* by (1) Atomic agglomeration, (2) Evolution, and (3) Illusion. But we may abandon the two first as inadequate for purely philosophic purposes and may consider that the Vedantic answer was Illusion. But if there is no real otherness, and if Brahman is predicateless, we are as far off as ever from any

(*a*) It is also interesting to compare the Sufi concept of the Ten Intelligences with Valentinius and his Aeons.

(*b*) Even the most rigid monists admit that relative knowledge is contained with in this dual relationship, but they exclude absolute knowledge from this thrall.

(*c*) *Prasthana-bheda.*

real explanation of how all this illusion came about. It is only the Samkhyan concept of Vyakta and Avyakta which is really explanatory thereof, and this explanation brings us back again whence we started, *viz.*, to a dualistic basis of thought.

Whichever way we turn we are driven to admit that from the sphere of our own relative knowledge a certain element of duality can never be eliminated, and that when we think of Monism we are speculating as to what may lie beyond this sphere; that we are seeking to transcend not only our physical experience but even to go beyond all positive thought. Let us then frankly own that this is the proper sphere of metaphysics, and that in some sense we admit the necessity of, or at least the assistance given to our thought by, these Persian concepts of Intelligences and Spheres. At the same time let us be quite sure that Monism can support no categories, although we can only prove this denial by the negative evidence of the many strong philosophers who have lost themselves in categories (*viz.* Kent, Schopenhauer, and many Hindus). What we should realise is that beyond our conditioned thought there must lie spheres (a sphere) not conditioned in the same way, but still perhaps not entirely free from all conditions, (*a*) and beyond that again a sphere of absolute thought which remains inconceivable to us.

Without this postulated inconceivability even the Vedanta must fail to satisfy philosophers, for in our thought there must always remain that other thing, be it Zero, Nescience or Non-being, and this other thing is fatal to Monism. The Vedanta defeats this objection by saying that Brahman is beyond all the predicates of our worldly experience, beyond all positive knowledge, and is hence inconceivable to us. Some Sufi philosophers reached this negative conclusion also. For instance Dhu'l-Nun tells us (*b*) "Whatever you imagine (God to be), God is the opposite of that."

Hence there remains two points upon which Philosophy has entirely failed to enlighten us. The first is whether this element of duality can entirely vanish from absolute thought without the complete annihilation of Knowledge. The second is—Why the Fall? Why Nescience? In both cases we have to satisfy ourselves that we cannot think so far as this. Yet on the other hand Monism is based on the unmoveable foundation of the sameness of all things, although this sameness cannot be directly proved. (*c*) It is only because of this sameness that all thought is mutually conditioned, the Mean by the Extremes, and the Extremes in like manner by their Mean. (*d*) On no hypothesis of otherness is such invariable result possible.

(*a*) Hindu philosophy dwells on these intermediate spheres of the relative absolute and of the absolute relative.

(*b*) *Qushayri*, 5, 10.

(*c*) Owing to our knowledge being based upon comparison, hence unable to function or act without objects of comparison (otherness).

(*d*) Compare Lao-Tzu.

THE BRIDGE. (Kinvat).

The history of Philosophy and of Religion is full of attempts to get over this difficulty, to provide some connection between this world and that other world, between the Truth as relative to ourselves, and Truth in its absolute character. In all these efforts religions possess, from a popular point of view, an immense advantage over philosophies, for they not only claim to show this connection, but even with certainty to transport the devotee from the temporal world to the eternal. It is not difficult for philosophies to show how the world as we know it is a world of illusion and of temporalities, always becoming and never being, but to show any connection between the Relative and the Absolute is a far more difficult problem. In their latter, or more perfected stages, the philosophies of Hindustan did not dwell on this question. To them the bridge was the Atman, the Self as we know it, obscured to some extent by forgetfulness of its true character, and bounded to some extent by Relativity, but still capable of becoming by the mere act of awakening, and so casting off such limitations—the Self in its absolute character. In the Upanishads we find certain allusions to it; we are told in *Khand, Upanishad VIII 4—2*, that Time, Death, and Deeds are all of this world, and cannot cross the bridge. Because the world of Brahman is free from all evil it must also be free from Good (which cannot exist without Evil), and must therefore be free from all ethical contention and be beyond the results flowing from deeds; and also, because of its eternal character, must be beyond Time and Death. In the Zoroastrian system this question of the Bridge (Kinvat) resolve itself into a desperate effort to carry this world of relativity *en bloc* into the sphere of absolutism. No similar attempt is known to Hindu philosophy. In it Time, Death, and Deeds pertain to Samsara, and the real Self remains unattached by the whole cosmic illusion.

SECTION IV.

THE SUFIS.

*All nature is but art, unknown to thee ;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see ;
All discord, harmony not understood ;
All partial evil, universal good. (a)*

Dhu'l Nnn (He of the Fish) al-Misri is cited by Mr. R. A. Nicholson (b) as the founder of theosophical Sufism. He quotes Jami (c) in support of his contention. In a more general sense Max Muller considered that the founders of Sufism were Abu Yasid al-Bistami and Junaid (d) and that in his view the main difference between Sufism and Brahmanism consisted in the imperfect Monism of the former. That is to say that although Sufism contemplated the approach of the Soul to God, or even went as far as to contemplate a loving union between the two, yet it never reached to the Brahmanic conception of

(a) Pope, *Essay on Man*.

(b) *Journal R. Asiatic Soc.*, April 1906, p. 309.

(c) *Najahat*, 36, 2989.

(d) *Theosophy*, p. 344.

absolute identity. (a) Undoubtedly this is true of some forms of Sufism, but surely not of some others. For instance Rami tells us that the soul of man is but a reflection of the divine soul ; that if the mirror were but purified from defilement (Nescience) "It would reflect the shining of the Sun of God." (b). Hence to Rumi the difference consisted in the distortion, not in any eternal unreflectability ; and perfect representation was contemplated. Now it is indisputable that perfect representation entails the obliteration of all difference, and hence consists in identity. (c) Jami taught the same truth in the lines.

"The Almighty hand, that.....
In the fleeting dust
Inscribed Himself, and in thy bosom set
A mirror to reflect Himself, in Thee."

Thus both Rumi and Jami taught the substantial identity of the Self ; but this destroys Ethic at one blow, and was hence unpalatable to the religious devotees who over-ran Persia many times with fire and sword. So this ultimate conception of Monism was hidden from the public gaze, just as to-day in Britain no one may speak the truth without offending either the non-conformist "conscience" or the dogmas of the churches. To my mind the failure of Sufism (as a whole) to reach the level of Brahmanic thought depended upon this ever existing terror.(d) For as the Truth was hidden away among a very small intellectual aristocracy, outside of which it was not taught, Nescience grew little by little, until so much ethical dogma was attached to these Persian systems that it became impossible logically to assert the identity of the Self. For evidently, if so much that was "bad" existed in the soul of Man, then the soul of man (consisting partly in Evil) could not be identical with the Supreme One. Hence Devils and Dualism.

Sir W. Jones (e) says. "The Sufis believed that the souls of men differ infinitely in *degree*, but not at all in *kind*, from the divine spirit of which they are *particles*, and in which they will ultimately be absorbed ; that the spirit of God pervades the universe, always immediately present to His work, and consequently always in substance; that He alone is perfect in benevolence, perfect truth, perfect beauty; that love of Him alone is *real* and genuine love, while that for other objects is absurd and illusory ; that the beauties of nature are faint resemblances, like images in a mirror, of the divine charms ;.....that nothing has a pure absolute existence but *mind* or *spirit* ; that *material substances*, as the ignorant call them, are no more than gay pictures presented continually to our *minds* by the semipertual artist ; that we must beware of attachment to such *phantoms* and attach ourselves exclusively to God, who

(a) *Theosophy*, p. 337.

(b) Whimfield's rendering of *Mesneri*.

(c) Monism.

(d) Mr. R. A. Nicholson, in *Journal R. Asiatic Soc.* for Ap. 1903, p. 306, views the earlier Sufis as quietists rather than as philosophers ; he says "the end of their love (of God) was apathetic submission to His will, not perfect knowledge of His being."

(e) Work published in 1807.

truly exists in us, as we solely exist in Him ; that we retain even in this forlorn state of separation from our Beloved, the *idea* of *heavenly beauty* and the *remembrance* of our primeval vows ; that sweet music, gentle breezes, fragrant flowers, perpetually renew the primary *idea*, refresh our fading memory, and melt us with tender affections ; etc.

On this I would note that the rendering of the supremely idealistic thought of Persia into philosophic English must entail a thorough knowledge of the philosophy of both countries as well as of their respective languages ; and would remark that the usage of certain terms in this passage (such as "pure absolute existence") are very puzzling, and almost justify us in thinking that the author may have used some terms in a popular and others in a technical sense. Hence we can hardly tell what he may have meant by such words as "particles" and "union". Nor can we tell whether he used the word "benevolence" as implying the *doing* of good deeds, as the *giving* of gifts by a system of ethical preference, or whether what he meant to convey by benevolence was merely the existence of a generous impulse even if such is restrained by Knowledge. Without reading too much technical knowledge into this passage, we shall find that Sufism, as here described, produced what at first appear to be two distinct avenues of escape from philosophic difficulty. For if the Self in man is conceived as a particle of the divine Self, that is as a part not as the whole, then the trouble of Primeval Nescience seems to vanish ; for as parts we can only have partial knowledge (*a*) and this would account for the difference between relative truth and absolute truth, and show why the latter was unapproachable by us. Again the æsthetic trait in the Persian character allowed a certain phase of philosophic thought to be expounded with greater clearness and conviction in Persian philosophy than was possible to the analytically minded Hindus. In Sufi conception Beauty was an object of worship because Beauty was the reflection of the divine image. They held that everything in this world which brought to us a perception of beauty could only do so to whatever extent it reflected the divine beauty. As Jami says (*b*) "When come to know celestial love, the earthly let go". And such love of Beauty was conceived by the Sufis merely as a stepping stone between earth and heaven. Again, as Ethicists, they saw that every earthly love was but a reflection of the Almighty, or at least of an ethical heaven as conceived. As we should phrase it now-a-days, their contention was that Beauty and love in that relative sense in which we recognise them here below, were but reflections of an absolutism which we could only imagine in moments of ecstasy. (*c*) But we do not find anywhere in Sufism that claim reliance upon philosophic truth which carries Hindu and Chinese philosophy to that higher plane of knowledge from which they look down upon ethic and upon conduct

(*a*) Compare Concepts of Monism, p.

(*b*) Salaman and Absal. (FitzGerald's rendering).

(*c*) And not even then, according to Dhu'l Nun.

(a) as matters of small importance. We can hardly imagine the Sufis using the words attributed to Lao-Tzu (b) "Heaven and earth exhibit no benevolence (ethical preference?); to them the ten thousand things (Names and Forms) are like straw dogs." (c) To reach this conception it is necessary to realise that the world of like and dislike, of ethical contention and of propriety in that sense, is a world that ever changes, passes away, and possesses no real being of its own; and that hence to centre the affections or the mind upon it is to chose an unworthy, because imaginary, objective.

We also notice a connection with Hebrew thought in some alleged personal covenant between the individual and the Creator, which had to be performed by every righteous man. No doubt the ethical basis of Sufism and of Hebraic thought, and their equally insistent optimism, are reconcileable with this idea of a personal covenant, and may be one reason why these systems of Western Asia differ so much from those of the further East. For both Taoism, Buddhism, and Brahmanism fail of necessity to include any element of optimism in their systems, inasmuch as they are based upon the overcoming of Nescience in Mankind, not upon the performance of any personal covenant and hence upon the obtaining of any personal reward by such act.

Others have claimed (d) that Sufism in its theosophical aspect was mainly a product of Greek (Neo-Platonist) speculation.

Inspiration held the place of highest honour amongst the later Sufis. They believed that in the case of the devotee the moment would arrive when, after continual meditation, he would be subject to some grand intuition or immediate knowledge of the Highest; and that this would be achieved without any special course of teaching or preparation, but merely by devotion and meditation. (e) On this subject Abdul Razzak says (f) "All praise to Allah who by His grace and favour has saved us from the researches of conventional sciences, who by the spirit of immediate intuition has lifted us above the tediumness of tradition and demonstration, who has removed us from the hollow threshing of straw, and kept us pure from disputation, opposition and contradiction, for all this is in the arena of uncertainty and the field of doubt of error, and heresy; glory to Him who has taken away from our eyes the veil of externals, of form, and confusion." Modern western philosophers who are constantly called upon to reconsider their conclusions, and to twist them round or drag them down so as to bring them into line with the discoveries

(a) In the sense of propriety.

(b) *Tao-Teh-King* I. 5, on Ethical Worth.

(c) The straw dogs of the Death Chamber watched the body of the departed, but their presumed utility was exhausted by the vigil. They followed the departed no further.

(d) R. A. Nicholson, and Marx.

(e) In this respect they were not in accord with Zoroaster's views on education,

(f) *Theosophy*, p. 345 (as quoted).

of modern science, would certainly rejoice if by any process of thought they could be "saved from the researches of conventional sciences." And it was certainly a delightful thought of Abdul Razzak's to escape the difficulty in this way ; the more so as he also discovered in Sufism a royal road to knowledge without the "tediousness of tradition and demonstration." Yet we cannot but recognise that the undoubted monism which formed the basis of Muhammedan and early Sufi thought no longer in any case relied upon demonstration, but in both instances present us with forms of monistic religion no longer dependent upon philosophic thought. We have only to watch a few generations pass before we see the extreme devotees in both these religious turn into howling dervishes, to witness the rapid transition by which philosophic teaching is turned out of court by æsthetic admiration, and to see the ravings and splutterings of the epileptic maniac preferred to all (other) forms of "reason". Rhapsody was no doubt thought necessary "to keep religion going" by the pragmatists and the revivalists of that age, who, throwing to one side the dictates of reason and the support of demonstration, relied solely upon intuitive "knowledge" of the Most High ; and whose spiritual descendants kept up their fervour by shrieks and lacerations, and by incoherent jabberings in (what appeared to their followers) unknown tongues. Nor need we express any surprise at the fate which inevitably follows all attempts to order human thought in defiance of Reason. For the antithesis to Reason is the very goal which is aimed at, and which will surely be attained, by all schools (ancient or modern) which deify Reason and prefer "direct" intuition, and the "revelations" of patients suffering from hysteria, epilepsy, illogic, or other forms of mania.

On the other hand some forms of Sufism have produced schools of monistic thought of great value, and especially in this connection we should mention the names of Rumi (Jellaleddin), Jami, Dhu'l-Nun, and Bayazid.*

It is not easy to see in what respects the main tenets of certain forms of Sufism transcended the doctrines of Muhammedanism, although doubtless the question of observances presented many divergencies.

The saying of Fyzal that—they are base (the basest of all) who worship God from fear, or from the expectation of benefits—reappears again in the writings of Rumi—

" Faithful they are, but not for Paradise,
God's will the only crowning of their faith ;
And not for seething Hell flee they from sin,
But that their will must serve the Will divine."

It is to this period in the history of philosophy, and to the Persian and Arabic teachers of this time in especial, that we should trace back the beginning of Fatalistic Monism as a distinct school of thought. Of course

* Bayazid was an unflinching monist. He held that to speak of "I" and of "God" was to assert otherness. He "came forth" from his ego "as a snake from its skin ; then he looked and saw that Lover, Beloved, and Love, are all one", (T.A. I, 160, 16 ; and 171, 18.

Fatalism in some sense is necessary to every form of monistic thought, but there is a great difference between that form of Fatalism which conceives of the Supreme Spirit as wishless, and the form which holds that supreme ordination directs every event. It is in opposition to the Brahmanic systems that these Persian Fatalists, both orthodox Muhammetan and Sufi, stand out in such great contrast ; and it is perhaps only in the case of themselves and of their successors of the modern school of Fatalistic Monism that we find monistic philosophy admitting the Will of God in a directive and determinative sense. Now this very difference (*a*) underlies and prejudices the monism of these Persian and Arabic Schools. For just as certainly as Will presupposes Objects, Parts, and Choice, so is Will connected with some ethical synchrony. Let us admit that Choice may be determined, not on ethical worth, but solely on the question of betterment ; that choice may be directed to the attainment of what is beneficial but not necessarily "good" in any ethical sense. Very well, but how can we apply this admission to the conceived Will of the perfect one without proclaiming the absurdity that the Will of God is confined to material benefits ? Therefore I say that just as no religion can shake itself free from Ethic, no more can any philosophy based on the "Will" of God ; and that it was this admission of Difference which prejudiced the monism of the Persian and Arabian schools, and which finally resulted in their practical condemnation of Philosophy at the suit of Ethic.

In his Gifford Lectures delivered before the University of Glasgow in 1892, Max Muller, in his eleventh Lecture, gives a great mass of information with reference to the philosophy of the Sufis. He evidently felt how difficult it was to draw the thread of any special philosophic truth through all the schools of Sufism. For though the whole were monistic in the strictest sense of the word, and all placed special value upon direct inspiration from on high, the lecturer was seemingly so bewildered by the variety of their doctrines that he did not attempt to trace out any foundation of philosophy common to all these schools. He gives us (*b*) the four stages of ascent towards the liberation, which are, (1) *Humility* (that the mind should not be full of "false knowledge" or allegations imparted by the demons) and *Obedience* (*shariat*) ; (2) *Lore*, and hence the overcoming of desire and the becoming wishless (*tarikat*) ; (3) *Knowledge* (to be obtained intuitively but neither learned from the teacher, nor by any process of reasoning) (*marifat*) ; and (4) *Truth*, that is perfect representation (*c*) of God, perfect self-effacement or loss of identity in the divine Self (*Hakikat*).

But, after all, some such stages as these are necessary to every system whether of philosophy or of religion. Humility, or some sense of incompleteness (weakness through want of knowledge), must be the prerequisite for the first visit to the physician ; and discipline is also essential. In the

(*a*) Between God and Will.

(*b*) *Theosophy*, p. 348

(*c*) Compare the Christian teaching of the Imitation of Jesus.

earlier stages of every process of betterment some form of admiration must necessarily ensue, or the devotee would no longer pursue the course; and resignation to the Divine Will (*a*) is a necessity to all forms of Fatalistic Monism. For by the pupils of Lao-Tzu the lesson was first learnt that whosoever may foresee (an event) no one can alter it; and it would indeed be a contradiction in terms for any Fatalistic Monist to maintain that he was not resigned to the Divine "Will." And as to inspired knowledge, that again merely means that the disciple had realised the illusions of relativity (or some of them). Lastly, the conceptual attainment of the Truth is the climax of all forms of Monism. So that, even when we have recognised the four stages of Sufism, this by itself does not take us very far towards understanding its meaning.

Again, if we attempt to say what portion of the Sufi system of morals may be made to depend from monistic philosophy, then we may claim that there is at least a common element in the system of morals deducible from the philosophic basis of both Sufism and Brahmanism. But on the other hand it is true that Persian thought as a whole tended rather to a comparison with Buddhism than with Brahmanism, and that Ethic claimed a larger share than did pure philosophy. Hence from the Sufi philosophy it was ultimately attempted to deduce a more elaborate system of Ethic than could be made to depend from any philosophic basis. The Brahmanic dictum that Knowledge is above Good Works is rendered again more or less exactly in the Sufi tenet that the Lover (the devotee of Truth) is no longer subject to the law. And similar reasons are also given, *viz.*, that as he had already gone through the disciplinary process demanded in his school, and surrendered the ego, and hence desired nothing for himself, that he was therefore no longer capable of any selfish action, and that to such an one legal restrictions became merely-hindrances. Again, those who, having reached this advanced stage in philosophic thought, recognise Knowledge as above Good Works, no longer act from any ethical motive, and hence can no longer be attached by merit or demerit.

It has been recently said by a sociologist of note on the subject of Socialism that when we had all reached this condition of mind then Socialism would be no longer to be feared; but if we were all like this, Socialism, as dependent on legal enactment would no longer advantage any of us. But some forms of Sufism never got quite so far as this. In such schools it is said that the reason why the most advanced philosophers can do no wrong is because they are quite incapable of committing any act displeasing to the Most High. But this, of course, presupposes "Will" in the Most High, and also presupposes that they know exactly what this "Will" is, hence that they are guided by direct revelation, not by any demonstrable truth. And such would claim that they had reached a stage when philosophy is no longer necessary.

(*a*) If we can conceive Will as an attribute of the Supreme One; which cannot be conceived by Brahmanists.

The doctrine that Self, or that Reason or Truth (to whatever extent we may possess it) is but a representation or reflection of the eternal Self, is very strongly brought out in Sufi thought. Rumi says (*a*)

If a mirror reflects not, of what use is it?
 Knowest thou why thy mirror reflects not?
 Because the rust has not been scoured from its face. (*b*)
 If it were purified from all rust and defilement
 It would reflect the shining of the Sun of God.

And no system of Monism, however elaborate, could carry us much further than this.

We may probably discern in the thought of Sufism how the teaching of Jesus effected the philosophies of the farther East. If we compare Muhammetanism, Sufism, and the Vedic philosophies, we shall recognise that all three are equally monistic (*c*), but that in respect of Ethic the Persian systems occupied an intermediate position between "the Knowledge above Works" of Hindustan and the "Good for the sake of Good" taught by Jesus. In the case of the Brahmanic philosophies, although they did not deny the utility and the necessity of ethic, they did deny its philosophic truth. Sufism strove to make Ethic dependent on philosophic truth, and Jesus taught the value of Ethic for its own sake.

The three heavens of monistic thought are dominated by our conceptions of Beauty, Love, and Truth, and thus constitute rest-houses for the Aesthete, the Ethicist, and the Philosopher. There is no cause for wonder when we see how easily the artistic perceptions of some individuals give to this first phase of philosophic thought an æsthetic turn, so that thought-representation made beautiful by artistic perception takes up a position of dominance over all matters of abstract truth or metaphysical reality. For the heaven of beauty is the true and proper home of all this.

The second heaven of ethical merit has obtained many of its devotees from within the folds of Christianity, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism; for these three religions rely upon Benevolence and Good Deeds, and treat Knowledge as though it were a matter of subsidiary importance. To them Ethic is the one thing necessary, is the object and end of our existence; hence these three beliefs are rightly classed with religions and not with philosophies. Now although it is quite conceivable that Philosophy and Religion may both dictate in certain respects similar courses of conduct, yet in philosophic concept all such actions depend upon certain faces of development, and the importance which we attach to conduct alters with each step we take towards the attainment of Truth; whereas all these religions hold that goodness and virtue together with the personal privileges to be obtained thereby) are the goals of our being, and the All else is made to depend therefrom. The devotees of such religions regard

(*a*) Translation by E. H. Winfield.

(*b*) Persian mirrors were made of metal highly burnished.

(*c*) According to their respective lights, or points of view.

Truth as only beneficial if it subserves the ends already dictated by the promptings of conscience. To them Truth is no longer something to be attained at all cost, but is a voluntary subject which can only hold a subsidiary position, and is only admissible if it explains the dogmas of the Faithful. This fixed basis of belief shuts out for ever any permissible increase of knowledge in these religious and ethical systems, and the world of their thought is constrained henceforth to wander round and round the dogmas which have been formulated and the allegations which have been made and which have been accepted by them as axioms.

As to the Persian systems particularly, it is true of latter Zoroastrianism that it remains a religion and can never rise above the heaven of ethical worth, and is for ever shut out from all possibility of attaining to the worship of Truth in the sense pursued by the Brahmanic philosophies ; yet it is clear that the Sufis realised this limitation of Zoroastrianism to Ethic, and their own efforts were mainly directed at breaking through this barrier. Certainly they started from the same basis of thought as the Zoroastrians. Thus they started from the position of those who worship merit in the individual ; but they strove to show how human ideas of merit expand and alter with growing knowledge until we become almost ashamed of the importance which we once granted to acts of benevolence. Just as we Moderns now see that the unthinking distribution of alms to the needy, although prompted by the best motives, does more harm than good to the people generally. So the Sufis saw that there was a constant tendency to the change of all customs and beliefs founded on an ethical basis, and they realised the instability of a world founded on a basis of ethic.

Aesthetic merit was bound up in Sufi thought with Benevolence and Virtue as the three fundamental attributes of the Godhead. It is very difficult to compare the writings of an age of chivalry and epic poetry, such as then existed in Persia, with the literature of an age of great critical ability and philosophic attainment such as existed in Hindustan. And this difficulty is increased by the fact that so many great Sufi philosophers at one time wrote works of high philosophical value and at other times heroic poetry and love songs. Many critics have felt baffled by the almost incredible versatility of such writers as Jami, and have sought to find traces of philosophic thought in works that were not ostensibly of philosophic import. And such critics received some encouragement from the fact that the philosophic thought of Sufism was always rendered (in poems) under the guise of Love, and with the fervid imagery of that epoch. It is quite easy to understand how the less critical commentators fail to discriminate between this class of philosophic epic, and what were love songs pure and simple such as any troubador might have sung. It is indeed true that in Sufi writings we constantly find that Monism or Absolutism is contrasted with Dualism or Relativity in some such sense as we might contrast the joy, love, delight, and peace of Union (Monism), with the sorrow, discord, etc., of Separation (Dualism). To them

the pain of life was that inevitable separation or breaking up to which the Truth must be subject before it can provide food for the mind by presenting us with objects of comparison. The pain of Separation consisted, in this view of the necessary tearing asunder which the inherent dualism of our thought (*a*) demanded, and the cessation from all this was the joy of Union. In this concept Sufism reached its climax ; but the effort was great, and imagery of this kind lent itself to abuse at the hands of the unworthy. Yet the great teachers of Sufism cannot be blamed for the fact that a number of less learned and less idealistic writers existed. Though permeated to the core with these conceptions of Love and Beauty, the leading Sufi teachers did not fail to perceive how all this world of æsthetic and ethical concept was constantly changing and passing away. They conceived of human beauty and love as but the reflection of divine love and divine beauty. From this it followed that they conceived the mind of man as capable of reflecting this divine love and beauty in some form, however imperfect. And from this it again followed that to reach the highest possible stage in the worship of Love and Beauty it became necessary to so clear the mirror of the mind that it should be enabled to reflect this divine love and beauty in its true essence or reality, and no longer to obscure it, or to see it, as in a mirror, distorted by relativity. Then the question arises, how to thus clear the mind so that it should be able to bear the true image of the world. The Vedic sages saw that this was only possible by the overcoming of Nescience by Knowledge (imparted by the teacher). But the Sufis did not seem to have ever attained this thought. They held, on the other hand, that this state of perfection could be gained intuitively by inspiration from on High ; that he who was ethically good and perfect would by continual meditation ultimately receive the reward of direct revelation from the Almighty, and would thus (in their view) know God in a way which would never be reached by any human process of reasoning. We shall find the same conception cropping out again among the Christian Mystics and Quietists.

In comparing Sufism with Brahmanism two facts stand out very clearly; one great similarity and one apparent dissimilarity. Above all things Sufism is the *Doctrine of Reflection*, and the objective was *Union*. Individual souls or intelligent entities are treated as the mirrors in which the Almighty reflected ; as illumined specks of human consciousness seeking reunion with the source from which they spring. Admitting the obvious imperfections and distortions which reflection implies, the Sufis relied on the doctrine of *Fana* to wipe out once for all this faulty representation, and to find the fullness of all reality and knowledge in God.

Vedantic thought claims that the real-self in man is in identity with the Supreme Being, an identity obscured by illusion but none the less real. Hence the vedantist cannot contemplate union, as, in his view, this union is already an accomplished fact. Yet we may doubt whether this distinction between

(*a*) As determined by our apperceptions [Times, Space, and Causality].

Vedanticism and Brahmanism is absolute, and whether we may not regard it as implying two views of the same fact. Jahangirs (*a*) called the Vedanta "the science of Sufism."

The doctrine of reflection is common to both systems. We find as far back as the period of the Upanishads (*b*) "There shines not sun, nor moon, nor stars; nor do these lightnings shine, much less this fire. When He shines forth all things shine after Him, by Brahman's shining shineth all below." Also in the Bhagavad Gita VII, 10. "I am the intellect of the intelligent."

It would therefore seem that the difference is due rather to differing similes and modes of expression than to any incompatibility of doctrine. In the one case the medium of reflection is faulty, in the other Ignorance causes the Truth to be hidden in the mist of Maya.

Vignana would have found no difficulty whatever in reconciling the two philosophies.

Although I have included Sufism under the general heading of "Persian" systems of thought, I do not wish it to be deduced from this juxtaposition that Sufism is specially the indigenous product of Persian rather than of exogenous Greek or of Muhammadan thought. Mr Nicholson sums up the matter (briefly) thus. That the ascetic side of Sufism was a Muhammadan product; the theosophic side, developed by Dhu'l-Nun, was the product of Greek philosophy; and that the later pantheistic side, introduced by Bayazid, was a product of Persian or Indian thought.

Personally I would say that the influence of the Platonists and Neoplatonists and of Plotinus is clearly traceable, and that we can also trace in a more general and less defined sense the influences of Hindu and Chinese thought. For there is a certain homogeneity in Oriental thought, a birthright that cannot be bartered away.

SECTION V.

EXTRACTS.

Attar.

Nihilism was not unknown during the literary period of Persia. We find Attar accounting for the phenomenal world in this style, "He first made the Mountains; then cleared the face of the Earth from Sea; then fixed it fast on Gau (the Bull); Gau on Máhi (the Fish) and Máhi on Air; and Air on what? On Nothing; Nothing on Nothing, all is Nothing—Enough." (*c*) Attar clearly had in his mind that no chain of causation can stretch across the chasm separating our world from that other; that no logic can prove the reality of Matter, but must always leave an unanswerable "Whence."

(*a*) *Memoirs of Jahangirs*, (Rogers, 1909,) p. 356.

(*b*) *Mundakopanishad*, III, 2–10.

(*c*) De Sacy in *Pendnamah*, XXXV.

BAYAZID AL BISTAMI.

By his teaching Sufi philosophy became perfected, and moreover notwithstanding all his efforts to the contrary, he proved by empirical means that there is at least some ground for belief in inspiration. This may seem a hard saying, but its truth may be readily grasped. For he proved, in at least one instance, the Sufi claim that knowledge of the highest may come through inspiration following meditation, and does not entail reasoning. In their view the mind was the mirror of Almighty, and "His light", they said, "may shine on whomsoever he selects."

Now it is a fact in experience that meditation unguided by reason usually results in an ecstatic condition of intellectual aberration. Yet there must be exceptions to every rule, and perhaps Bayazid was the favoured one who attained to great monistic truths by intuition. If he did thus attain, then by the event he proved the Sufi doctrine that by intuition great truths may become manifest, and thus empirically confirmed their dictum.

It is said that Bayazid introduced Hindu pantheism into Sufism and thereby modified it greatly. He is also accredited with borrowing the doctrine of Nirvana and bringing that into Sufism under the name of Fana. But I cannot see that his doctrine of annihilation is more closely connected with the Nirvana of Buddhism than with the fanum of Greece and Rome. Temple devotees the world over are held to have annihilated worldly desires, and, not least, the faithful who gaze on the tomb of the prophet and then destroy their sight, that so they may retain, undimmed, the memory of its glory.

Hence it is doubtful if the Sufi doctrine of Fana had any close connection with Buddhist thought, as some have asserted.

Bayazid carried Sufism to great heights of Idealism. He surveyed the edifice of monistic ambition, and cried out "How great is this temple, but how lonely". Then again he "looked out" and saw "that Temple and Worshipper and the worshipped are all one." He would pray to himself, and would not speak of "God" and of "I" because he held that this juxtaposition was blasphemous.

The fact that Hindu philosophy influenced that of Persia is undoubtedly, but the date when this influence was first felt is doubtful. Omar Khayyam's 109th quatrain has only one significance,—

My heart inquired 'What is the heaven sent lore.
If thou'st attained it, teach me I implore ?'
'Alif' said I, if there be one within,
One letter seems to name him Say no more !

ALI BEN UTHMAN AL-HUJWIRI.

A devout Muhammedan Sufi who founded a defensible system Sufi of Philosophy. He was an Afghan by birth and was a contemporary of Qushayri and just survived him (died about 1072 A. D.). He visited the tomb of Bayazid and thought his doctrine of Fana. Let me quote one of his hymns;

"Praise be to God, who hath revealed the secrets of His kingdom to His Saints, and hath disclosed the mysteries of His power to His intimates..... and hath let the hearts of gnostics taste the joy of His communion. He it is that bringeth dead hearts to life by the radiance of the perception of His eternity and His majesty, and reanimates them with the comforting spirit of knowledge by divulging His Names." (a)

This Hymn of Praise disclosed the mysticism of the writer, the admitted influence of Greek Philosophy, and discloses also the existence of a school of Logic and Nominative philosophy with which I am unacquainted. But some school of this kind must surely have existed before the thought could arise that Knowledge could come through the divulging of Names. This must presuppose proper classes and categories so named that propositions could be stated ?

He was at one with the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita in that he had "renounced the fruits of actions." In his introduction to his great work he says "I have asked God's blessing, and have cleared my heart of motives related to self.....and I divest myself of my own strength and ability in word and deed. It is God that gives success". (a)

The problems of philosophy that Al Hujwiri set himself to solve do not vary much from those still awaiting solution. Some of them are as follows—to explain "the nature of Divine Love and how it is manifested in human hearts, and why the intellect is unable to reach the essence thereof, and why the soul recoils from the reality thereof, and why the spirit is lulled in the purity thereof." (a)

He says *On the knowledge of God*. "The worth of everyone is in proportion to gnosis, and he who is without gnosis is worth nothing." (a) These words would not have sounded strangely in the mouth of Gotama, for they are the crux of the Nyaya System of Philosophy.

Jami.

Jami, one of the last of the Persian classical poets, has remained unaccountably neglected by British students. Yet, in the whole history for the world he stands alone, unapproached by any other writer in his own particular art. For he has rendered for us some of the great conceptions of monistic philosophy in the setting of Art, has combined Philosophy and Aesthetic, rapturous thought and entrancing beauty of imagery, in one delicious reverie. He has been called "a mystic" by persons deficient of philosophic insight, himself foresaw and foretold the neglect that would overtake his philosophic writings. He said in *Salaman and Absal*. (b)

One who travelled in the desert
Saw Majnnn where he was sitting
All alone like a magician
Tracing letters in the sand.

(a) Nicholson's rendering.

(b) Fitzgerald's rendering.

“ Oh distracted Lover writing
 “ What the sword-wind of the desert
 “ Undeciphers so that no one
 “ After you shall understand ”
 Majnun answered.—“ I am writing
 “ Only for myself, and only
 “ ‘ Laila ’ ”.

To understand this quotation we must know not only that the real meaning of that one word “ Laila ” contains a volume of knowledge, but that before that word “ Lover ” can be appraised fairly the student must have mastered ecstatic thought in the widest acceptation of the term ; for “ the veil over the face of that Beloved is the dust of the body ”.

Jami felt the great trouble that disturbs the otherwise unruffled surface of Monistic thought, and blots out at times both bird and sky from the mirror of the still lake. If I am That One, whose power causes this seeming division, partition, or pluralism, and if That One is I, then whence this impotence limited by five senses ; this veil of nescience which hinders me ? In this query he restated the eternal problem to which no philosopher has yet given a conclusive answer. *Why the (individual) self, or Atman. Why this forgetfulness of its own true Being. Why Nescience, if That One is Intelligence itself. Why any, even apparent, derogation of that supreme and perfect existence ?*

His knowledge of Samkhyan thought is also evident. When “ The Voice ” (Brahman as the Word) whispered in the ear to abjure all worldly matters and think only “ of Him whose palace the soul is, and treasure house ” (a), then cometh the silent passenger, the passive spectator of Time and of Existence.

“ who notices and knows
 Its income and out-going, and then comes
 to fill it when the Strange (b) is departed.” (c)

Jami taught that Prayer was foolish, if directed to attain benefits or preference.

“ Wisely let the matter rest
 In the hands of Allah wholly,
 Who, whatever we are after,
 Understands our business best.” (c)

And if our prayers are granted we shall rue our own requests, and have nothing better to pray for than that our previous foolish demands should be forgiven and wiped out. This Jami instances in the demand of the childless man for a son, which was granted him, but the son turned out a reprobate.

In this one poem (c) we can trace the existence of some of the most important monistic doctrines. But, in so doing, we must make great allowance

(a) Compare *Bhagavad Gita* I,X, 18. “ I am.....the place the treasure-house ” etc. At Susa, in Persia, in the time of Darius, there was a building called ‘ The Treasure House.’

(b) Prakriti.

(c) ‘Salman and Absl,’ FitzGerald’s rendering

for the unconscious transposition of thought from the modern translator to the Persian author, and never forget that we are dealing not with Jami alone, but with Jami-cum-FitzGerald. For instance, lines 434 and 440 show us his concept of the Ego as the Reflector ; line 432 gives us Reason as the thing lacking to complete the unity of our *nebeneinander*—as “ the completer of the Imperfect ” ; this same line discloses to us Reason as the source of true Knowledge, and as superior to all other alleged sources of knowledge, and places Desire (Lust) as the enemy ; and line 444 shows us that the concept of “ Will ” in Schopenhauer’s sense was earlier known to Jami.

In respect of his Sufism Jami was a Neoplatonist. His *Lawa’ih* (flashes of Light) was clearly a work on flashes of “ inner light,” notwithstanding that the real source of light was not conceived as originating “ within ”, but as reflected in us. Hence, within this meaning of “ inner light ” (*Ishraq*) his teaching may be traced back to the Platonists (*Ishraqin*).

A Prayer of Jami’s from the introduction to his *Lawa’ih*.

O God, deliver us from preoccupation with worldly vanities.....remove from our eyes the veil of ignorance, and show us things as they really are. Show not to us non-existence as existent, nor cast the veil of non-existence over beauty of existence. Make this phenomenal world the mirror (*a*) to reflect the manifestations of Thy beauty, and not a veil to separate and repel us from Thee. Cause these unreal phenomena of the universe to be for us the sources of knowledge and insight, and not the cause of ignorance and blindness.

“ Make my heart pure, my soul from error free,
Make tears and sighs my daily lot to be,
And lead me on Thy road away from self,
That lost to self I may approach to Thee.”
“ My lust for this world and the next efface,
Grant me the crown of poverty and grace.”

So Jami approached the Almighty not to beg for some preferential position above his fellow-men, not to obtain benefits, or to avoid detriments or penalties, or through any other unworthy motive, but in a purely philosophic and altruistic spirit.

His doctrine of *Fana* was as follows :—

“ Self-annihilation consists in this, that through the overpowering influence of the Very Being upon the inner man, there remains no consciousness of aught beside Him.” (*b*)

Jami goes on to show that this sense of annihilation is not the final stage ; for finally the happy one loses all consciousness of the fact that he has become unconscious of his ego. *Fana* has now become the normal condition of his existence.

Works of super-errogation are seldom profitable, yet there are certain religious enthusiasts in England who are now calling upon us to “ educate the

(a) Compare *Gulhan-i Raz*, p. 14, line 134.

(b) *Lawa’ih*. IX.

Chinese." Let this education be, at least, mutual, for not a day passes in which we do not need the assistance of the Chinese classics. Moreover this need for the Chinese to educate us is no new need of the day. It has existed ever since the dawn of civilization in Britain, and in most other countries. Even the erudite and Polished Jami, in the quotation I have just cited, was unconsciously drawing from celestial sources. Quite a millennium and a half previously we find in the Chinese classics.

"The man of little virtue is always thinking about his virtue—because he has little virtue. But the man of great virtue knows not of his virtue—because he has great virtue."

For when Virtue or Altruism become the normal, and hence unconscious condition of our existence, we have surely reached a step beyond the consciousness of such aims.

Jami conceived the Absolute (Truth) and the Relative (Phenomena). We are the mirrors of the Almighty, and thus relative truth was but a faulty reflection of absolute Truth, human love and beauty of the Divine attributes. He says, "whosoever is wise derives his wisdom from the Divine wisdom. Wherever intelligence is found it is the fruit of the Divine intelligence. In a word, all are attributes of Deity which have descended from the zenith of the Universal and Absolute to the nadir of the particular and relative (a).

This concept gives us a good instance of how the metaphysical basis of Sufism differs from that of the Vedanta. In the latter system it is not admissible to predicate any positive virtues to the Supreme One, nor positive predicates of any kind. All that can be known is that "It is not this, It is not that. It does not consist in Error, Unreality, Illogic," and so forth.

But there remains some possibility of synthetic treatment. For some might say that all attributes blended in one Being lose their individual meanings, and that it is only in the mist of Maya that they appear to us as we now know them; just as light may be broken up to appear as various colours. Hence in some sense the metaphysic of Jami and of the Vedanta does not seem irreconcileable, and there is one school of Hindu thought which has travelled so far on the synthetic direction here indicated. Jami also (b) admits that we may conceive such attributes as comprehended in the Absolute as a cause comprehends its consequences, not as existing therein as parts making up the whole.

Let me quote a final quatrain with which Jami closes his *Lawa'ih*. Addressing himself he says—

"Jami ! leave polishing of phrases, cease
Writing and chanting fables, hold thy peace ;
Dream not that Truth can be revealed by words:
From this fond dream, O dreamer find release !"

(a) *Lawa'ih*, V.

(b) *Lawa'ih*, XIX.

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